



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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REP. BARNES WELCOMES JANAN ATTA NAJEEB TO THE WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY

MADISON – Wisconsin State Representative Mandela Barnes (D-Milwaukee) welcomed Janan Atta Najeeb to lead the Wisconsin State Assembly in prayer prior to the start of their legislative session today and released the following statement:

“February 3rd of this year, President Obama made the first ever presidential visit to a mosque when he visited the Islamic Society of Baltimore. It is in that vein that I invited Janan Atta Najeeb to lead the Wisconsin State Assembly in prayer today. She is the first Muslim woman to ever have done so on our Assembly floor.

“I believe this body should welcome people from all world religions into our chambers. The Muslim American population is very small, only 3.3 million people, and far too many Americans have negative perceptions of the religion and those who practice it. While extreme misrepresentations have skewed general understanding of Muslim Americans and perpetuate Islamophobia across our nation, Mrs. Najeeb represents the pillars of her faith as a community leader, advocate, and scholar.

“Mrs. Najeeb is a founding member and the current president of the Milwaukee Muslim Women’s Coalition. This organization has had an amazing impact on our community since its inception in 1994, with its programming designed to empower women and girls and its community outreach that promotes peace and religious understanding.

“I thank Janan Atta Najeeb for joining me in the Assembly today to bring us a new spiritual perspective and connect us with her words. I look forward to continue working with her and others to enhance the understanding of Islam and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual respect.”

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